

an aft column pair is located on the pontoon (2) with one column (4) thereof on each side of the center-line (CL), characterized in that said system of lateral beams (7) is substantially H-shaped-when observed from above-in such a way that the vertical posts of the "H" correspond to two or more longitudinal beams (7a, 7b) extending on each side of said center-line (CL) from the aft column pair to the forward column pair, whilst the horizontal mid-post of the "H" corresponds to one or more transversal beams (7c, 7d, 7e).

6. (Amended) A semi-submersible offshore platform (1) according to claim 1, wherein the offshore platform (1) has four or six columns (4) and a substantially rectangular pontoon (2), and wherein a starboard column pair is located on the pontoon with one column thereof on each side of a transversal midship-line (ML) through the offshore platform (1), and a port column pair is located on the pontoon (2) with one column (4) thereof on each side of said midship-line (ML), characterized in that said system of lateral beams (7) is substantially H-shaped-when observed from above- in such a way that the vertical posts of the "H" correspond to two or more transversal beams (7g, 7h) extending on each side of said midship-line (ML) from the port column pair to the starboard column pair, whilst the horizontal mid-post of the "H" corresponds to one or more of the longitudinal beams (7i, 7j, 7k).

8. (Amended) A semi-submersible offshore platform (1) according to claim 1, wherein the offshore platform (1) has three columns (4) and a substantially triangular pontoon (2), characterized in that said system of lateral beams (7) is substantially T-shaped-when observed from above-in such a way that the horizontal part of the "T" corresponds a first beam (7A) extending between two columns (4), and wherein the vertical part of the "T" corresponds to a second beam (7B) which extends from a third column (4) to a mid-portion (29) of said first beam (7A).

10. (Amended) A semi-submersible offshore platform (1) according to claim 1, characterized in that one or more of the lateral beams (7) are formed as a torsion box (15), said torsion box (15) being wider than a typical beam (7) in the system of lateral beams (7).

13. (Amended) A semi-submersible offshore platform (1) according to claim 10, characterized in that the torsion box (15) has a width which corresponds to the width of a column (4) which supports the torsion Box (15).

14. (Amended) A semi-submersible offshore platform (1) according to claim 10, characterized in that the torsion box (15) is narrower than a column (4) which supports the torsion box (15), at least one side-wall (16) of the torsion box coinciding with an internal bulkhead (18) in the column (4).